A RESOLUTION

Commending Claude Sitton upon being inducted into the Georgia Journalism Hall of Fame;
and for other purposes.

WHEREAS, Claude Sitton grew up on a farm in Rockdale County, Georgia, during the
1930s, working side-by-side with African American sharecroppers; and as a teen, he loved
politics so much that he would skip school to go watch the state legislature; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Sitton later set the standard for reporting on the civil rights movement; his
stories in the New York Times were reliable, scrupulously fair, and detail-driven; his reports
offered no quarter to the white supremacists who didn't want their discrimination and
violence exposed, but they didn't romanticize the struggle for equal rights; and

WHEREAS, Newsweek praised him in 1964 as "the best daily newspaperman on the
Southern scene"; Hank Klibanoff, journalism professor at Emory University, said that Mr.
Sitton "got where no one else was. It was hustle, and a determination to see it with his own
eyes"; and

WHEREAS, shortly after becoming the chief Southern correspondent for the Times in 1958,
he was thrust into the recurring racial upheavals in Little Rock, Arkansas; over the next six
years, he reported on the flash points and shifting fault lines of the civil rights struggle; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Sitton had a large impact on the reporting of the civil rights movement, the
federal government's response, and the movement itself; and

WHEREAS, compared with other reporters, Mr. Sitton moved faster and had better sources,
as many civil rights leaders carried his phone number, because they knew that if he was
around, the world was watching; and
WHEREAS, Mr. Sitton didn't pull punches in his stories; when protesters secured few gains in Albany, Georgia, he took readers inside the fraying coalition between Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee; and

WHEREAS, his stories sometimes moved presidents to action; when John Kennedy and his brother, Bobby, read Mr. Sitton's account of the Terrell County sheriff disrupting a voting rights rally, they sent FBI agents to investigate voting rights violations in south Georgia; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Sitton and his family settled in metro Atlanta around 1990 in Oxford, Georgia, not far from Covington; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Sitton helped start the journalism program at Emory University; and

WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper that the outstanding accomplishments of this remarkable and distinguished Georgian be appropriately recognized.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that the members of this body commend Claude Sitton upon being inducted into the Georgia Journalism Hall of Fame.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the family of Claude Sitton.